

# Corporal Punishment in Public Schools



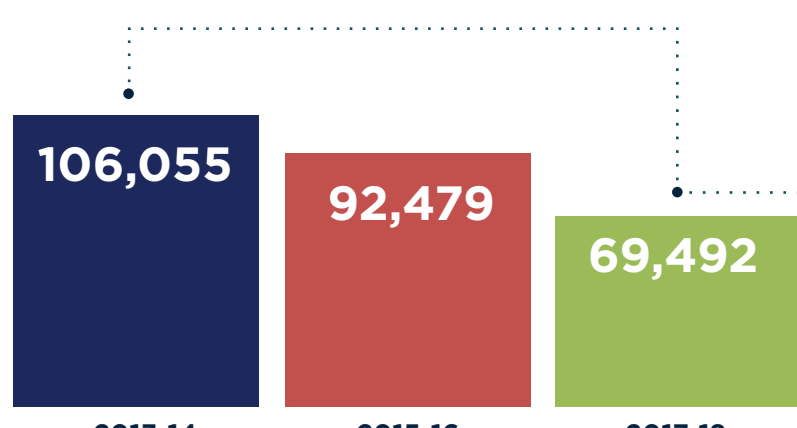
U.S. Department of Education  
Office for Civil Rights

2017-18 Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC)

The Civil Rights Data Collection gathers and publishes key information about student access to educational opportunities and school climate from public schools (pre-K through 12th grade) in all 50 states, D.C., and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico.

The CRDC defines corporal punishment as paddling, spanking, or other forms of physical punishment imposed on a child. The data reported in this factsheet is for K-12 students.\*

## THE FACTS

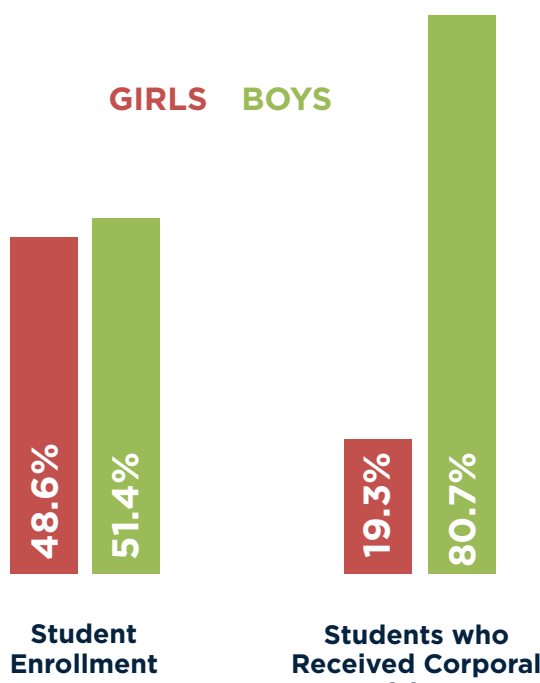


From 2013-14 to 2017-18, the number of students reported to receive corporal punishment **decreased by 34.5%.**

### By sex of student, 2017-18

**4.0x**

Boys were 4.0 times more likely than girls to receive corporal punishment.



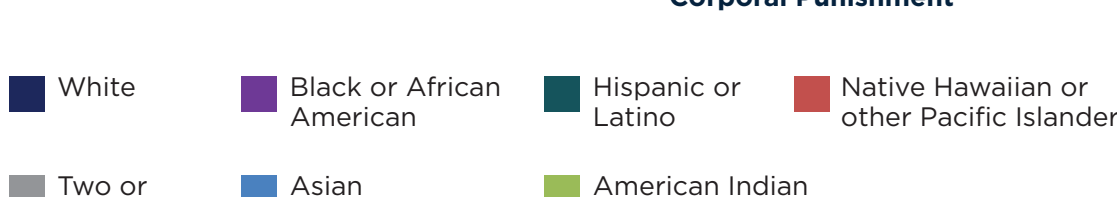
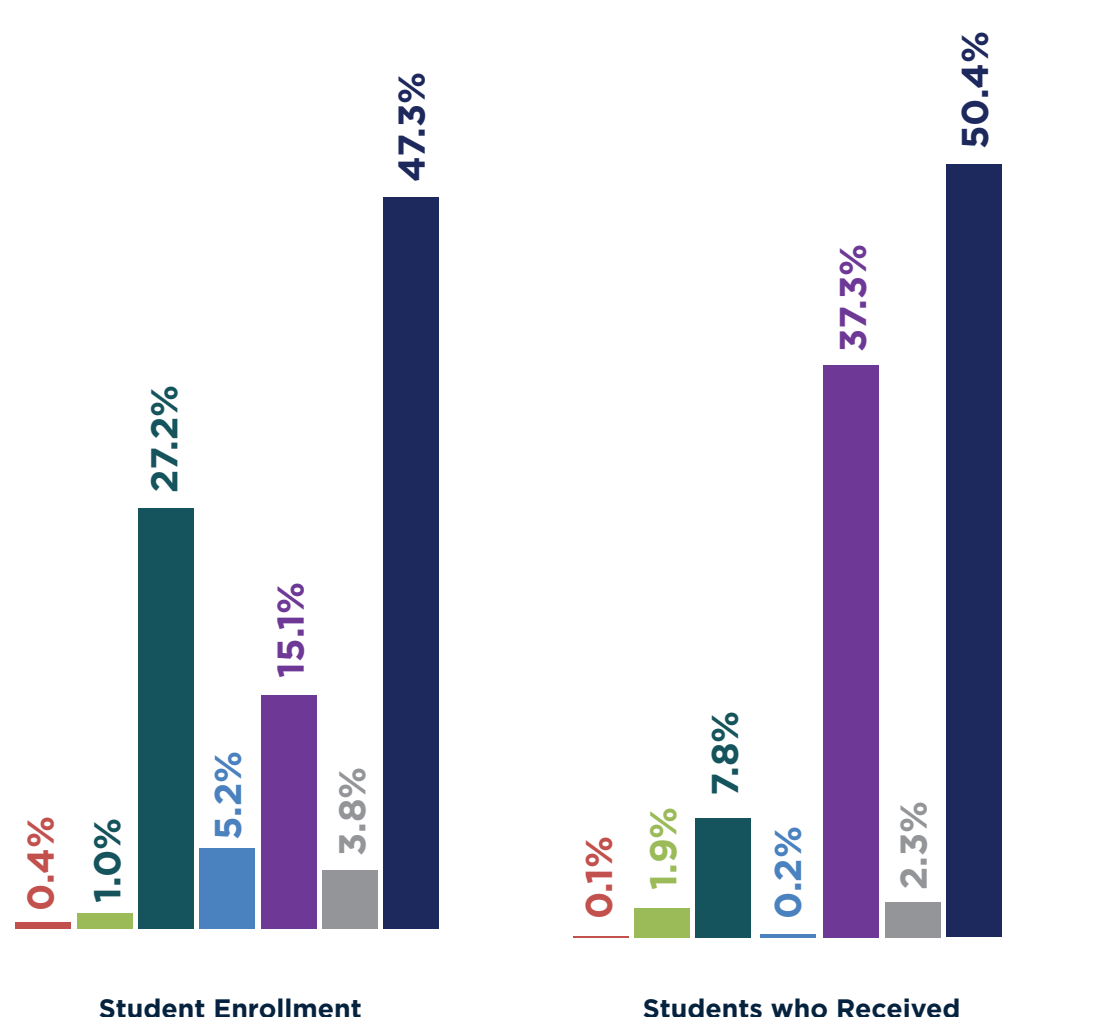
### By race/ethnicity of student, 2017-18

Across all of the race/ethnicities, American Indian or Alaska Native, Black, and White students disproportionately received corporal punishment.

**Black students received corporal punishment more than twice their rate of enrollment and American Indian or Alaska Native students received corporal punishment almost twice their rate of enrollment.**

**2.3x**

IN 2017-18, BLACK STUDENTS WERE 2.3 TIMES MORE LIKELY THAN WHITE STUDENTS TO RECEIVE CORPORAL PUNISHMENT.



**Students with disabilities** served under the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) were overrepresented in receipt of corporal punishment. Students served under IDEA represented 13.2% of the student enrollment but 16.5% of the students who received corporal punishment.

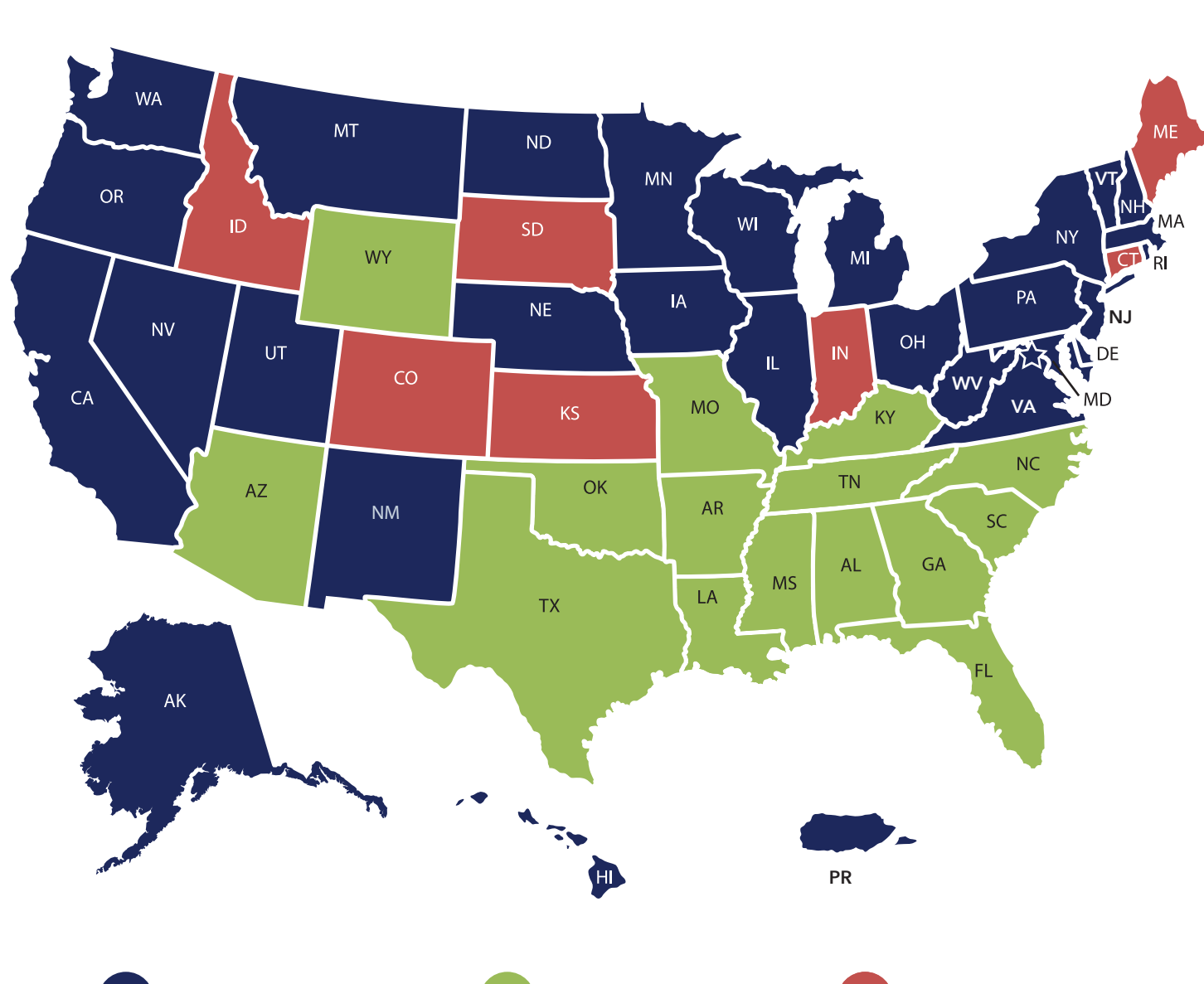
SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2017-18 Civil Rights Data Collection, released October 2020, updated May 2021, available at <https://ocrdata.ed.gov>.

## STATE LAW ON CORPORAL PUNISHMENT IN SCHOOLS

**28** states, D.C., and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico ban corporal punishment in schools.

The majority of students who received corporal punishment were in the southern United States:

**Alabama, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Texas.**



\*For information about preschool students who received corporal punishment please visit the CRDC 2017-18 State and National Estimates' preschool discipline tab.



**More information** on corporal punishment and other civil rights data is available at <https://ocrdata.ed.gov>. The entire *Focus on Student Discipline* series can be found at: <https://ocrdata.ed.gov/resources/datareports>.



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